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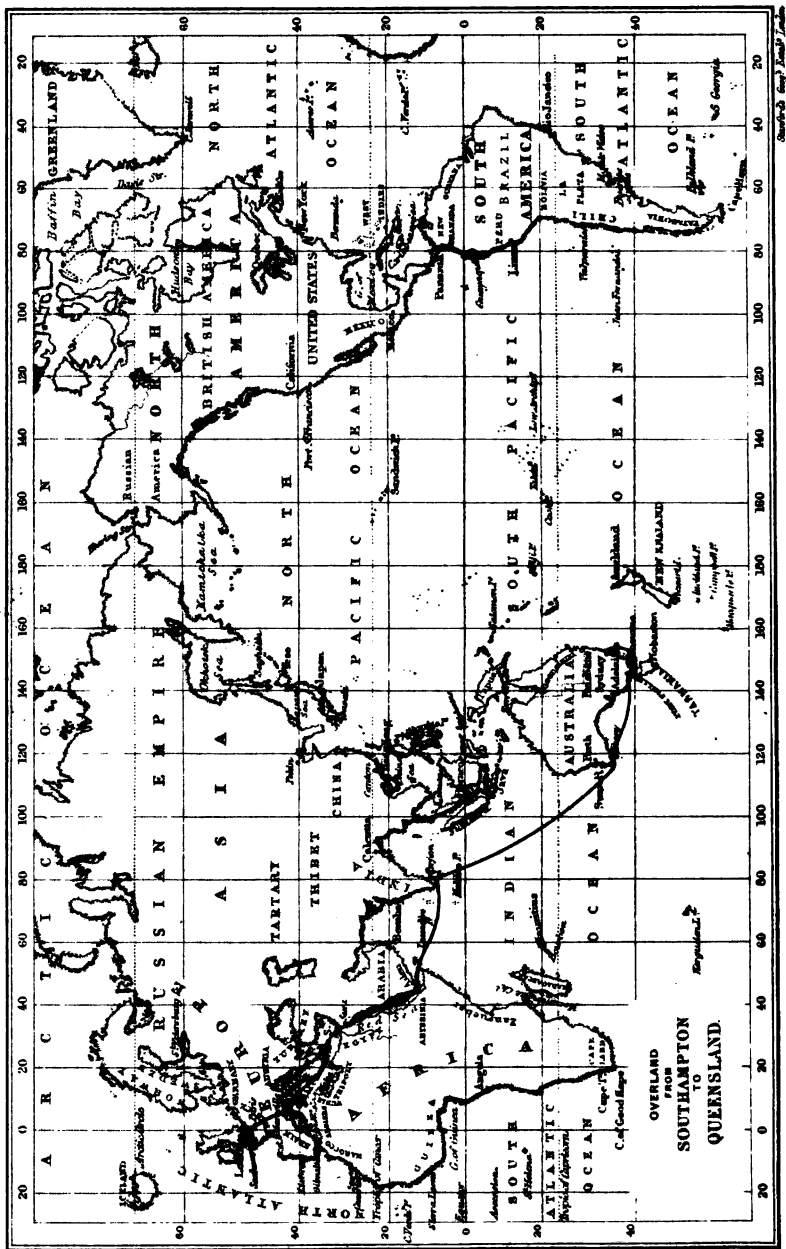


O V E R L A N D

FROM

SOUTHAMPTON TO QUEENSLAND.





OVERLAND

FROM

SOUTHAMPTON

TO

QUEENSLAND.

BY

M. H. MARSH, M.P., M.A., F.R.G.S.



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OVERLAND FROM SOUTHAMPTON TO QUEENSLAND.

THE following pages are merely meant to be a sketch of a rapid voyage, and the reader must imagine himself carried along by steam the whole way. Should any part of it not be particularly interesting to him, he is recommended to skip it, and to turn to another page, and perhaps begin with Egypt, p. 4.

In many respects the pleasantest way of going to Paris is by Southampton and Havre, and although the sea voyage is, of course, longer than from Folkestone or Dover, the steamers are larger and more comfortable. The scenery on the way to Paris is much prettier, and the undulating country covered with woods is much more agreeable than the sameness of the landscape on the other route.

I had not been at Havre since the year 1828, when as a boy I first went to France. What changes have taken place: in those days the pockets of all the passengers were strictly searched for contraband goods, now your portmanteau is passed without being opened on merely saying that there is nothing to declare; there were passports in those days. Then one had to go over a pavé road to Paris in a huge landau on a dicky without springs, the postilions had wooden boots and pigtails, now there is one of the best railways in France.

Havre was then lighted with miserable lanterns hung across the streets, now of course there is gas. A letter took many days to go to England, and the post even from Paris only went some three or four days in the week, now a letter goes back by the return steamer, and is delivered in London the next day, and you may of course use the telegraph if you like. It is curious that all these improvements should at first have been English. We taught the French what they know of free trade, and the other inventions are our own; in fact, the great civilization of this country consists in the triumph of mind over matter, and in this we have altogether taken the lead. As the railway passed through the fields, at this time (June 23, 1865), one could see that, owing to the very small tenures, the peasant proprietors were in many instances forced to walk over their neighbours' crops to get at their own. There is no appearance of actual poverty, but the houses are very small, being almost invariably on one floor only, and wholly incapable of containing rooms enough for a family, according to the rules laid down by those who in a most praiseworthy manner make the improved dwellings of the poor their study.

To a mere stranger Paris is perhaps the most fascinating place in the world, as almost every taste may be gratified there, and its beautiful new streets must strike every one. The stone, however, even of some of the new buildings, like that of our own Houses of Parliament, is beginning to fail, and signs of coal smoke may be seen.

The country between Paris and Lyons is pleasing and fertile, and has agreeable associations from producing "the gay serene good-natured Burgundy." Lyons is now a very fine town with magnificent streets. It has perhaps the best situation of any town in Europe, between its two noble rivers. There are many who think the Rhone more beautiful than the Rhine; it certainly has the advantage of climate, and a sort of garden cultivation. The mulberry trees were most of them covered with leaves, a great misfortune to the inhabitants, as it proved that disease had killed the silkworms; they are now, however, getting eggs from Japan, and the produce is healthy; some of the passengers in the steamers beyond Suez were on a voyage to Japan to buy the precious cargoes of eggs, worth nearly their weight in gold. Avignon has not changed for the better like the rest of France, it seems as if the genius of old times was still lurking about it, and no improvements have taken place. This is remarkable, as the growth of madder to a very great extent in the neighbourhood during the present century has made it the emporium of a very important trade. Marseilles has wonderfully changed in the last few years, and from having been one of the dirtiest towns in Europe with a small and crowded port, has now beautiful airy streets and a splendid harbour.

Adieu, beau pays de France, with your pleasant country and agreeable kind-hearted people, whose many good qualities and virtues are perhaps generally not enough appreciated, except by those who know them well.

On our way to Malta we passed through the beautiful islands between Corsica and Sardinia, seeing, amongst the rest, Caprera—Garibaldi's island. Sardinia seems to be a most lovely country, and is rarely visited by tourists. We only touched, for 9 or 10 hours, to coal at Malta, and arrived at Alexandria, having had a perfectly smooth passage the whole way, the Mediterranean, as is often the case in summer, was as still as a lake.

However often one may have seen it, the land of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies must always give an intense interest; it is the scene of the great works of the Egyptians, and of the taste, genius and subtlety of the wonderful Greeks. It is a little recovering now from the frightful blight of Mussulman conquest and rule with its sulky, unsocial and sensual religion, creating a people wholly without the spirit of chivalry, and whose divines it is believed, after much reading of the Koran and many consultations, have decided that *some* women may, by possibility, have souls and go to heaven. At the time we reached Alexandria, the people were, according to the returns, dying of cholera at the rate of 1000 a-day; but most likely the numbers were really much greater. The only wonder is how the Arabs ever live at all, as they are crowded together in very small mud huts, with every conceivable filth about them. At this time, those who could afford it were apparently leaving the place in ship-loads.

Having seen the Pyramids twenty-one years before I did not visit them, either in going or returning, as it

may be presumed that they have not changed much since.

Egypt has certainly improved since 1844, when I was first there, and since 1855, when I was last there, there are magnificent houses at Alexandria, chiefly built by merchants who have made their money by cotton, in the last few years. The people are evidently better off than they were, and wages are much higher. They are not beat so much by the Turks as they used to be; the Turks thinking that if a little beating does not answer, there is nothing like beating more, as may be read of in the story of the barber's blind brother in the Arabian nights.

The dragomans and donkey boys now talk English instead of as formerly *Lingua Franca*. They learn English chiefly at the Missionary schools, and perhaps they go there more for that purpose than to learn Christianity, as a knowledge of English is as good as a fortune to a dragoman. Riding on a donkey is not a disagreeable way of going about a town, particularly as you have nothing to do but to guide your donkey, as the boys do all the beating and shouting for you. Most travellers in the East agree that Cairo is the best specimen of an Oriental town. There certainly is a great deal very striking in it, and it is totally different from anything European, so much so, that one can scarcely believe oneself in the same world.

Formerly passengers were taken to Suez in vans drawn by horses and mules; it was rather slow, but very amusing, as Arab horses are unaccustomed to draught,

and they used to plunge and kick all the way, so that it was sometimes necessary to take them out and lunge them with a rope, all the passengers seemed to enjoy it, and used to laugh heartily; the fact is, that the air of the desert is so refreshing that it makes every one good-humoured.

There is not much to be seen in going by the railway through the desert. Much more could be seen formerly by the road. I shall never forget the first sight of the Pyramids, when going by the vans, many years ago.

It was shortly after day break when we stepped out of the carriages. The sun was rising, not struggling through mists and clouds, but as he can rise in southern lands, in full glory, like a giant rejoicing to run his course on his great mission as the creator and preserver of the life of the world. There were amongst us men who with undaunted courage had maintained the honour of their country in Caubul and Candahar. There were those who in the true spirit of enterprise had just opened a commerce with the millions of China, and brought together the industries of the East and West. There, too, were those who had looked for the first time on untouched forests in Australia, and had laid the foundation of high civilization, arts, science, and Christianity in a wilderness; and there were ladies, accomplished and delicate, who, with a courage of their own, had shared the hardships, dangers, and fortunes of their husbands. Not a word was spoken, all were thinking, there was much to think of. There lay before us the

rich valley of the great River, with its then unknown source, carrying life into the desert. There was the land of Egypt with its ancient and mysterious history. The sun's rays had tinged the Pyramids with vermillion. There they were, unchanged, whilst nations, rulers and faiths, had faded away from beneath their feet. The dynasties of ancient Egypt are no more, even the very races of its population may have utterly perished. The chosen people, nursed on the Nile, and led from thence by a mighty hand and outstretched arm, is now scattered throughout the world. The Greeks with their high taste, refinement and poetry, are no longer there. The Romans, who seemed born to be the rulers of the world, have passed away. The Arab, the bold child of the desert, who offered a choice to nations of the Koran, the tribute, or the sword ; who once threatened all Christendom with conquest, and carried his banners to the walls of Paris, has been displaced by the Turk. The rule of the Turk is on the wane, instead of marching to the gates of Vienna he is rescued from ruin by Western powers.

The Pyramids had been the offspring of the mysterious faith of ancient Egypt. They had seen the worship of Jehovah and the great Lawgiver of the Hebrews. The gods and the philosophy of Greece had dwelt by their side. Christianity was there, at one time in all its simple purity and meekness, until marred and dimmed by the subtleties and presumptuous pride of an age of vice and darkness. The faith of Mahomet, passing off its impostures linked to an undying truth, still lingers in the land.

These were the thoughts and recollections which rushed into the minds of full grown men and women. Even little children, and little children were there, could think of the touching tale of Joseph yearning for his younger brother, of the baby in the bullrushes, of plagues, magicians and miracles.

Beneath us, in a hollow penned in by rocks, was a camp of Bedouins, of a race as old, as unchanged, and perhaps as unchangeable as the Pyramids themselves, doomed by the ill-starred birth of their great forefather to the life of the homeless wanderer, fulfilling even at this day the forecast of the olden time.

Such sights and such thoughts as these make up the great enjoyments of life, and can never be forgotten.

Some people think that it never rains in the desert, on the contrary it rains occasionally very hard, indeed so much that trenches are dug by the side of the railway and the stations, to carry off the water and prevent them from being washed away. As the English made the railway, the French thought they must do something, and are now making the famous Lesseps' canal; there can be little doubt that it will be finished, as engineers can do anything in these days with time and money; there may be, however, some doubt whether it will ever be much used. The Red Sea can never be navigated with advantage by anything but powerful steamers, on account of the winds which blow furiously up and down into the centre at different times, and never across: this is so much the case, that coals are brought through Egypt to Suez in preference to

bringing them by sea ; colliers sometimes take twelve months for the voyage from England. A small canal from the Nile to Suez is almost finished, which will probably be the means of bringing under cultivation a considerable tract of country ; the water is, I believe, brackish, though not being much given to water drinking, I did not taste it, nor could I find out that any of the passengers by the steamer had. Water, however, which is only a little salt will do for irrigation.

For the first two days from Suez we had a very pleasant passage, the wind blowing cool and strong from the north. This is the famous Etesian wind of the Greeks ; the Egyptians now catch it in a sort of funnel at the tops of the houses, and get it to blow through them. The view of the entirely barren mountains on either side of the gulf of Suez is very striking ; it is exceedingly well represented in Mr. Herbert's famous painting in the House of Lords ; it is almost impossible to believe how any one who had never seen Arabia could have painted it so well. We passed very near what the Arabs call the Bath of Pharaoh, as the tradition is that it was the scene of the passage of the Israelites. I believe that some Biblical critics think the tradition is not true, probably because it was not on the line of march : no doubt a very good reason. One wishes, however, to believe it was the place, as there are magnificent rocks, from the top of which one might fancy Moses waving his wand. Great numbers of locusts came on board almost every day. We heard

that they were doing much mischief on shore, and the Arabs said they had not been so numerous for seventy years. They have also had lately a most serious cattle plague in Arabia.

The third day the heat increased, and was very intense before we got to the Straits of Babel Mandeb. July is not the worst month, as August and September are hotter; the thermometer, however, stood at 95°, which without wind is very disagreeable. Many people think that there is something peculiarly hurtful in the heat of the Red Sea. I certainly have known the thermometer in Australia much higher without feeling the slightest inconvenience from it. It is as high sometimes in the Red Sea as 111° on deck, and 155° in the stoke hole of a steamer. A stoke hole, however, even in a temperate climate, will get the thermometer up to 110°. People who perspire freely and have what is called prickly heat, are seldom hurt, except that the prickly heat almost skins them alive. Negroes, called Seedies, from the coast of Africa, work in the bunkers and carry coal to the furnaces, they seem to care little about the heat. I saw one of them one day sleeping over the hatchway above the boilers with his head resting against the funnel. The firemen are Bengalees, and are said to stand the heat even better than the Negroes, but if ill they do not recover so easily, not having such strong constitutions; the engineers are English and suffer a great deal. Sometimes the heat is so great that the steamer has to be put about to catch the breeze, and save the lives of the passengers.

There is a preparation of magnesia, which is said to have a very good effect in cooling the blood. On the voyage out none of the passengers actually died, although some suffered a great deal, the young generally the most. More die on the return voyage, probably from having their constitutions weakened by a life in India.

On my return a passenger did die in the Indian Ocean, though not altogether from heat, as he was invalided from China. Poor fellow, he was a Lieutenant in the Navy, and had caught his death on duty from remaining too long in wet clothes. It is a sad thing for any one to die entirely amongst strangers, far away from all those who care about him. A burial at sea is a most affecting sight. The night before had been quite calm, so that one could hear the bubbling of the wake of the ship, through the iron-plating, and, as is often the case in calms, there was a great deal of phosphorescence in the spray, enough to show a reflection on the tops of the cabins. It was one of those still, lurid, sullen, hazy mornings, which are often seen in the tropics, and as the noise of the screw was stopped the dead silence was very striking. The body is sewn up in a hammock, and at all events on this occasion most appropriately covered with the Union Jack, when at the words in the Burial service, "we therefore commit his body to the deep," it slips from under the flag into the sea with a heavy plunging sound.

The sun's haze shines with a lurid glare,
And hushed is the tropical breeze ;
His grave is the trough of the heaving swell,
His pall is the flag of the seas.

The Giant of fire is stilled,
In that stillness there seems to be grief ;
With the lisped voice of prayer and a tear from the brave,
He is plunged in the dreary deep.

The sailor is called from this bustling world,
In the pride of youth he is dead ;
No relative solaced his parting hour,
Or stood by his lonely bed.

Fond fancy might help him he saw a sweet smile
In the spray light that flickered above ;
And dying he heard in the gurgling wake,
The sobs of his early love.

And in lands far away, when with lightning speed,
The news of his loss shall come ;
Full many a tear of true grief will be shed,
In the halls of his once happy home.

A father and mother shall grieve for their boy,
Whose courage had long been their pride ;
And a sister with purest of earthly love,
Her face in her sorrow shall hide.

Every attention is paid to the passengers by the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and ice which is most essential to health is provided. The table is liberal, and almost overdone ; the cooks are as good as sea cooks can be, but most people who have been much

on board ship share the prejudice of sailors against sea cooks and all their belongings ; they certainly have a way of making every dish, however good, look messy, one would almost wish to call a favourite dog to eat it. Nothing can be better in every respect than the officers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, both as regards nautical skill and care and gentleman-like conduct. It has been said that in the old Indiamen the usual amusement of the passengers was making love and quarrelling, the most charming and most odious of pursuits ; but in these days of steam there is not much time for either. It fatigues one too much in the great heat to read anything except what is very light, perhaps a French novel is the best book on board a ship, it is full of inconsistencies, improbabilities, and impossibilities, but keeps up an interest ; it is like a beef steak pudding with oysters, or a sea pie, or Devonshire pie made up of all kinds of things, and after all agreeable.

When we got out of the Red Sea the weather was much cooler. Aden seems as if it were made to catch all the heat it can. It is built in the crater of an extinct volcano, with high sunburnt rocks all round. It is in many respects a curious place : there are great tanks for holding water, which were made long before the Turks went there by some race of people wholly unknown to history. These tanks had fallen into decay, but have of late been repaired. They are quite necessary, as it sometimes does not rain for five years, and in the summer of 1865 there had been two years and a half

without rain to fill them. It is, however, proposed to form a water company, and bring the water from a mountain stream some miles off. The people do not want much water, as they use very little, except for actual drinking, and sea water must do for all the washing they want. Arabs also sometimes rub the dirt off themselves with sand, as knives are cleaned with brick dust, and soldiers' clothes with pipe-clay. The Europeans distil water for themselves. When the English took Aden in January, 1840, there were about 400 inhabitants, there are now 40,000; such is the result of security of property and free trade. There are no harbour dues or customs.

The principal inhabitants are Arabs, and Somalis, who come from the opposite coast of Africa, the latter are a fine muscular race and seem to work hard. They want some keeping in order, and if they behave ill, they are sent back to Africa, and are told never to return. The police is good and there is not much crime. A Somali, however, the morning I was there, knocked down a Bengalee with a stone, close to the Government House, and robbed him of about £7, and ran away over the rocks with a policeman after him. It was a very pretty chase, as there were no trees or bushes to hide it; at first the robber had the best of it, but was caught afterwards. When the policeman came up to him, he was sitting down quietly as if he had been in the same place for some time, the policeman, however, put his ear to his heart, and found at once that it was beating as if he had been running fast.

This is the principle of the stethoscope. He was at once dealt with, and as he was an old thief, was sentenced to hard work on the roads, and afterwards to be sent to Africa and never to come back again. The name of the policeman who caught him was Hassan. The names of all thieves should be buried in oblivion. Aden is supplied with provisions chiefly from Arabia Felix, which, to judge by its productions, must be a very fine country. The view of the table land of Arabia Felix from Aden is magnificent in the clear atmosphere, it must be some 10,000 feet high, and can be seen more than 100 miles off.

From the first occupation some of the tribes of Arabs were paid money to protect the roads, and other tribes were paid to allow supplies to pass in safety over their land, but the latter agreement was not faithfully carried out. The present Governor of Aden, Colonel Merewether, having been General Jacob's Lieutenant in Scinde, was not the sort of man to pay black mail to any one; so he remonstrated at first, but finding that would not do, he did not quote

“Puffendorf and Grotius,
And prove from Vattel,
Exceeding well,
Such a deed would be quite atrocious,”

but went into the country and talked to them with a couple of Armstrong guns, which soon brought them to terms, and they are now most excellent allies and friends. Until lately no European dared shew his face out of the walls of Aden, as he was sure to be shot at

if he did. The late Governor, Sir William Cogan, first thrashed and then cultivated the friendship of the nearest tribe, the present Governor consolidated the friendship without any further fighting with that tribe, and is now on the best of terms with them and nearly all the others. Not along ago he took a party of ladies thirty miles into the country without any European escort; they took provisions with them, and gave the Arabs a sort of pic-nic luncheon; amongst other things they had ice, the Arabs liked the iced water, but seem to have ate the ice pudding too fast, as they said it burnt their throats. They were very much astonished at being told that the ice was made by steam; they said no wonder you English are so daring, and care neither for Allah or Shitan, for should you ever be doomed to a place too hot for you, you could always make ice to cool your tongues with. The climate of Aden though hot is upon the whole healthy. Indians however find that if they go there in bad health they do not recover easily, perhaps it is because there is no cool season as in the upper provinces of India. The residence of the Governor has no walls, only matting hung between pillars to allow the air to blow through: this is pleasant.

After leaving Aden the weather was again very hot in the Gulf; but we soon encountered the south-west monsoon, and the thermometer shortly sunk to between 83 and 85 degrees. The monsoon at its height comes down from the mountains of Africa like a lion; it is in fact almost a tempest with a very heavy sea. It slackens

nearer Ceylon. The theory of the monsoon is, that as the summer heats the land in India, the cooler air of the sea rushes in, and in winter when the sea is warmer than the land, the cool air rushes down upon the sea. This, however, does not account for the monsoon blowing so furiously during the summer from the African shore, and it may be doubted if it can be properly explained. The monsoons are the making of India; the south-west monsoon gives it plenty of rain in the summer when most wanted, and the certainty of the wind, at all events before the days of steam, was most favourable to trade, as ships could make a voyage with a fair wind both ways.

On our voyage to Ceylon we went between the Laccadives and Maldives, sighting one of the islands. They are nothing but raised coral reefs. The first vegetation which ever shows itself on a new coral island is said to be the cocoa-nut tree. The nut is drifted on the coral; the outer coat decomposes, and mixing with the lime in the coral makes a soil for itself; when once established, vegetable decomposition from the leaves and nuts goes on for a certain time in almost geometrical progression. Hundreds of these islands are now rising in the tropics, particularly in the South Pacific Ocean; and it is curious that an invisible insect should be forming islands, and even what may possibly some day or other be a continent. The coral, when taken out of the sea, is a beautiful blue, in a few hours the insects die, and it smells very disagreeably; the

colour changes at first to a yellowish tinge, and afterwards becomes white. The red coral used for ornaments is an entirely different thing, it is found in the Mediterranean.

Ceylon is by some said to be the finest specimen of tropical scenery and vegetation in the world. The cocoa-nut tree is grand and graceful; it generally prefers the sea-coast, as the even temperature of the sea breeze is particularly suited to it. It is called the Friend of man, because it gives him almost everything he wants. The stem is used for timber, and the leaves for roofs of buildings. The outside fibre of the nut makes ropes, fishing-nets, sails, mats, and even clothes, the nut itself is the food of many millions of people, and is excellent as the basis of a prawn currey. Oil is expressed from it, which is used for burning in the ordinary way, making stearine candles and soap, and for oiling the hair of the natives. The milk of the nut and the sap of the tree in the morning are cool, sweet, and wholesome; before night they ferment, and in that state are sometimes drank by the natives, but are most frequently distilled into arrack or rum. It is said that the tree will not produce nuts out of the sound of the voice of man. Talking has great power in the world, but it may be doubted whether any amount of it would make cocoa-nuts grow; perhaps the real fact is that within the reach of the voice of man there is always some little cultivation under the trees, and they are sure to be somewhat manured. The fruits in the island

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are very fine. Pine-apples grow in the hedge-rows, and are very good. Bananas are most plentiful, and form a great portion of the food of the people; they are said to produce forty times as much food to the acre as even healthy potatoes. Some of the other fruits are good, such as the mango; but, as a rule, tropical fruits are meant to live on, and are not meant to be eaten as a luxury at breakfast or dessert. There is a sort of grass which grows near the coast, called citronella, from which they get a scent, which is used among other things for soap.

I took the opportunity, on my return, of going into the interior of the island. The road from Galle to Colombo is remarkable for its beautiful tropical scenery—cocoa-nuts, arecas, and all sorts of palms, growing the whole way. The areca nut is used by the natives for chewing; when wrapped up in betel leaf with a little fine lime it becomes highly pungent, and stains the lips of those who eat it a bright red.

One is never more than a stone's throw from a house the whole way to Colombo, and the population seems enormous; it is a string of people and carts, called bandies, the whole way, many of the people carrying something on their heads. The population of the island generally is, however, not so very large, and is in this case very much confined to the coast, the interior here being barren and mountainous. The quantity of fish is also the cause of a great population. The original inhabitants of Ceylon are Cingalese; they are chiefly

Buddhists, and are nominally enjoined not to kill anything to eat; they, however, have no objection to fish, as they only take the fish out of the water and they die, which is their affair, and when they are dead of course they may eat them. Perhaps there is much of this sort of thing amongst others as well as Buddhists. Besides the Cingalese there are Tamils, who are of the Hindoo religion, and come from the South of India; numbers have been settled in the island for very many centuries, and before we took possession were the masters of the country; there are also many thousands who come over every year to work as coolies, chiefly on the coffee plantations and the roads. There are also people called Moormen, who are Mahometans, brought to Ceylon by the Arabian commerce, which in the time of the Caliphs was very great. The Moormen are still the most busy, industrious, and most prosperous people in the island. The native languages are Tamil and Cingalese; the Moormen have lost all traces of Arabic, and talk Tamil. The Portuguese and Dutch settlers have very much mixed with the other races, or have merged in the English. I only heard Portuguese spoken once whilst I was there, and Dutch never at all.

The Cingalese are the handsomest of the native races; they are not very black, they are strong and muscular, but very effeminate looking, and it is difficult for a stranger at first to tell men from women, and particularly boys from girls. Colombo is about

70 miles from Galle and is a very thriving place ; its great exports are coffee and cocoa-nut oil, and the imports are large, as Ceylon scarcely produces anything in sufficient quantity for its own consumption. Scarcely any animals are bred there ; the cattle and sheep come from the coast of Southern India, and the horses from India, the Persian Gulf and Australia. The fact is, the climate is too wet for animals. In many places small leeches live in the grass and would kill them ; the leeches even bite mankind and are particularly fond of the fresh blood of new arrivals ; they even got into my bed. The working oxen from the coast of India are very beautiful, they are valuable and are taken great care of, being put into sheds and washed all over and drenched with cocoa-nut mashes, they are almost always in first-rate condition. Colombo is the seat of the government, which seems to be most admirably administered by Sir Hercules Robinson, the present Governor, assisted by a council of good practical men nominated by the Crown. The council is carefully selected, with the view of representing every race and every interest in Ceylon. From Colombo towards the interior there is a good railway for the first 30 miles, after which there is a mail for the next 40 miles to Candy, with half-broken horses which kick, jump and plunge, but get along at a very good pace. The road is still covered with people and bandies, as if there were no end to them. The scenery is magnificent, surpassingly beautiful, with fine rivers, mountains, rice-

fields and forests. Coffee seems to begin to thrive about 1000 feet above the level of the sea; it is a thirsty plant, and as Ceylon has two wet monsoons instead of one as in India, it is particularly suited to it. The coffee plant is something like a Portugal laurel, and the berry which encloses the seed is called a cherry and looks very like one, the flower is white, sweet and pretty, and is used by the natives to decorate their altars; indeed, it is said, that for a long time after its introduction by the Arabs it was used for nothing else. A coffee plantation looks very like a vineyard, but is much prettier and more shining.

As far as Candy, coffee is grown almost entirely by the natives, who cultivate it in a rough kind of way, producing what is called in commerce native coffee; it is not so good as that grown on the plantations.

The best coffee is grown by English settlers, who shew a great deal of enterprise and have often very large establishments; it is grown perhaps as high as 5000 feet above the level of the sea, very much on steep slopes of mountains. It requires a great deal of weeding and attention; the labourers are Tamil coolies, earning about 8*d* a day the men, and 5*d* to 7*d* the women, which is high wages for them; when employed on the railroad they get as much as a shilling a day.

The great art of coffee planting, like any other undertaking, is to economise labour as much as possible, and the planters seem fully to understand this. They often

have tin or zinc pipes, sometimes perhaps a mile long, from the tops of the mountains, and wash the coffee-berries down to the establishments inside of them.

They do not make terraces as is done in many parts of Italy for the growth of vines and olives, they say it would not pay. The consequence of not making terraces is, that the land is fast washing away in the very heavy rains, and the roots of the coffee plants are half bare. So long as there is grass or wood upon land, water rushes over it without tearing it up, but when cultivated it washes it first into the valleys and rivers, and a good deal of it at last into the sea.

The road to Candy is excellent and seems to be a very good piece of engineering, it sometimes goes through tunnels. There was a tradition among the natives that some prophet had said that Candy could only be taken by an enemy who could go through rocks and mountains, this has been brought to pass. A railroad also will be shortly finished all the way.

Candy is quite a thing of itself, unlike any other town I have ever seen; the streets are broad, and there are some buildings and walls by no means ugly, built by the old Tamil kings. The Buddhist temple is large and full of shrines, before which flowers are offered every evening. One of the shrines contains a very large casket covered with rubies and other gems, if genuine they would be of immense value, but some suspect that they have been stolen long ago and glass put in their places. The priests seem to have various

dressess, but generally yellow. The Buddhist temples have lands of their own, and are well endowed.

It is said that since English missionaries have appeared, the Buddhist priests have exerted themselves more than before, but their religion does not appear to have any very great hold upon the people. There are Hindoo temples and a Mussulman mosque, which was well attended at sunset. There is also, close to the Buddhist temple, a temple for what is called Devil worship ; both Buddhists and Hindoos, and sometimes even Mussulmans, and some of the native Christians go to this temple. It is quite independent of their respective religions. There is a story told of an Englishman at Rome who used to take off his hat to the statue of Jupiter, and being asked why he did so, he said he thought it was as well to be on good terms with all parties, as no one could tell who might be uppermost at some time or other, and that Jupiter once had a long innings. Probably the natives of Ceylon attend the Devil worship on this principle. But all this must be going out slowly, as education is spreading amongst the people. The Government provides excellent schools where the English language and European history are taught. I saw some of the books in the hands of a boy who had just come from school, they seemed to be a good selection, and there was one which was a sort of essay against falsehood, a most capital lesson-book for an Oriental. The climate of Candy is a little cooler than that of the coast, as it is about 2000 feet high.

There is, however, no great change, until after about 3000 feet, when the change is very great.

There is no season at Candy, as it is as much summer at one time of year as another, and there are always dahlias and roses, and all sorts of flowers in the gardens. After leaving Candy, I visited several coffee plantations, and was very much pleased with the planters, who seem to be always gentlemen; in fact, the great enterprises of all our colonies, such as sheep farming in Australia, are principally carried on by gentlemen; such occupations requiring amongst other things liberal and kind treatment of labourers.

The coffee districts consist of three sorts of land, called Patna, forest (though perhaps more properly jungle), and cheena. The patna land is naturally cleared and covered with a coarse grass, which few things but elephants will eat: it is a poor soil, and if coffee is grown on it, it requires much manuring. The cheena is land that has been cleared by the natives and then abandoned: it is covered with thick bushes, the forest land is the richest.

The Cingalese, that is, the original inhabitants of Ceylon, are very good hands at clearing land, they will not work at other things at the wages of coolies; they contract to clear at a fixed price the acre, and earn good wages at it. The trees are felled, and the leaves and tops burnt, the rest is allowed to lie on the ground and rot; so far from interfering with the coffee shrubs, it decomposes rapidly in the damp climate and en-

riches the soil, disappearing altogether sometimes in three or four years.

Pusellava, on the road to the highlands of Ceylon, is about 3000 feet above the level of the sea, and here the climate is most decidedly cooler, a blanket at night being agreeable, and occasionally there are blazing fires in the mornings and evenings. The scenery near Pusellava is very fine, with rich vegetation, high mountains and bold rocks. Amongst other things, the hedges are very often made of rose trees, not dog-roses, but beautiful double roses. The cocoa-nut tree still grows there, but never bears nuts.

There is a very good road through the pass to the table-land of Neura Ellia. There is, however, no carriage conveyance, and the mode of travelling is to ride a horse with a coolie to attend to it, and another coolie to carry one's clothes, which ought to be put in a tin case to keep them dry: very heavy rains come on almost every day about two o'clock in the afternoon, during the wet monsoons.

The road is taken with very great engineering skill through the pass. The jungle on either side is very thick and full of flowers and flowering shrubs, but the trees are not so fine, and the whole thing is not to be compared to the beauty of the jungles in the northern part of New South Wales, and Queensland.

As I was going through the pass, a tremendous rain fell with a good deal of thunder and lightning. As I wished to get through it as quickly as possible, I trotted

on and left the coolies, who made short cuts up the mountains where a horse could not go. It got dark long before I got to Neura Ellia, and if I had lost my way, I might have been eaten up by leeches, of which there are great numbers a long way up the pass, although there are none on the highest ground.

I had a letter to enable me to stop at the Club at Neura Ellia, which would have been very pleasant; but I found the water so high in some of the brooks, that, even with a coolie I got for a guide, I could not cross: I therefore had to go to the "rest house," as small inns are called in Ceylon. I was of course thoroughly wet through, and the coolie with my carpet bag had not got there, and when he did come everything in the bag was soaked. I thought first of borrowing a native dress, and no doubt I should have looked very well in the garb of a respectable Moorman. There was however a missionary at the rest house, a good and guileless man, who very kindly lent me a suit of clothes, and we sat down to a good dinner with a roaring fire, which was very agreeable, after being so wet.

Neura Ellia is between 7000 and 8000 feet high, and the climate is of course very different from that of the lower country. Coffee ceases to grow, and rhododendrons supplant it, as they are said never to grow together. The rhododendrons are quite like trees. Potatoes and cabbages are grown and sent down the country as a great luxury, and eaten not only by the

Europeans but by natives. There is very little good grass, and the cattle and horses live a great deal on a kind of dwarf bamboo. The place is a sanatorium for soldiers. Many people engaged in occupations in Ceylon have very pretty villas in Neura Ellia, and come up occasionally ; they often keep their children there all the year round. It certainly seems to agree with them, for both they themselves and their nursemaids are rosy cheeked. The climate is certainly delightful after tropical heat, but it is not to be compared to the freshness of the table land of Australia, which the reader will come to by and bye. The nights are always cool and a fire is always pleasant ; there are sometimes white frosts, and a coffee planter describing to me the beauty of the climate, said that not only was there white frost on the ground, but also sometimes on the trees. Those who live in northern latitudes would not describe this as very delightful, but by contrast no doubt it is charming. One of the passes from Neura Ellia to some of the coffee plantations cannot be used by the bandies, and everything is carried on pack bullocks. The drivers make as nearly as possible the same noise as the Swiss do when calling the cows. People amuse themselves with elk hunting ; there are plenty of elks and the sport is good. There are leopards, which are troublesome sometimes, and take the cattle. Upon the whole, the evil of wild beasts and snakes in the tropics is very much exaggerated. I myself have never met with anything worse than a mosquito or a

gallinipper ; a gallinipper is a large striped mosquito, the hyena of the breed. Strangers, however, expect to see snakes always crossing their path, and to hear the tigers purring by the sides of the roads. The elephants in Ceylon sometimes do harm amongst the coffee plantations by treading them down. There are some called rogue elephants ; they are supposed to have been turned out of the herd for misconduct. They *always go alone*, and seem to like to do as much mischief as possible ; sometimes they wantonly kill people. A man is said once to have told a story of his having shot two rogue elephants, right and left, with a double-barrelled gun ; an Irishman who heard him, asked what sort of game bags he had to carry them home in.

After leaving Galle we very soon met the South East Trade winds, they blew very hard against us with a great deal of rain ; this is not commonly the case, as it is said by sailors that the Trades for many years have been light. It is a long stretch for a steamer from Galle to King George's Sound, 3330 miles. The first part of it is over the most lonely sea in the world, there is something awful in being on it ; it is not on the track of any ships, except those crossing from India and China to the Cape of Good Hope. We did not see a single sail, and not even a fish or bird, until we got fairly out of the Trades, soon afterwards albatrosses appeared. The albatross is a very fine bird with an enormous length of wing, sometimes as much as 17 feet across from one tip to the other, with one more

joint than any other bird. The same albatross will follow a sailing ship for two or three days together, for the sake of picking up any grease or offal which may be thrown overboard. Albatrosses differ very much from one another, and it is very easy to know them ; in fact, one makes a sort of acquaintance sometimes with a particular bird. There is a story of an albatross having been fired at by a rifle, when a feather was knocked out of his wing ; it was said that he followed the ship some 5000 miles. It is not easy to believe this. The albatross can scarcely rise out of the water in a calm, and flies very slowly, flapping his huge wings heavily ; his delight is in a storm, when he seems scarcely to move his wings at all, but makes the wind blow him round the ship as often as he likes, setting his wings like sails so as to go "on a wind." It is difficult to understand how this is done in the air only, that is in one medium ; a ship can do it from having a hold on the water by means of the keel, but by all rules an albatross ought to make nothing but lee way. It is a grand sight to see an albatross on the wing, and to know that he is at least 1000 miles from his home, as the eggs are only found on the land reached by discovery ships very far to the South of Australia amongst everlasting ice and snow. There are other birds, such as a sort of gull called a Cape Pigeon, which is very pretty, in fact the whole air swarms with birds ; as the sea is open to them and is full of their food, such as Portuguese men of war, and other molluscous things,

there seems to be no reason why these birds should not increase in numbers, as the old theory of population pressing on the means of subsistence can scarcely apply. There is no enemy in the air to destroy them, as there are no birds of prey, but perhaps sharks keep down the numbers by snapping them up when they light upon the water.

On nearing the coast of Australia, every one must be delighted with the freshness of the air, which seems to give new life after the muggy South East Trades. It was the first really clear sky we had seen since the Red Sea.

The South Western Cape of Australia is called the Lewin, or Lioness, perhaps from the furious winds which blow there; it seems to be the very home of storms; some say, however, that it was the name of the ship of the great discoverer, Tasman; at all events there is nothing at all like a lion or lioness, but there is one headland which is a very *amusing* likeness of the late King of the French, Louis Philippe.

King George's Sound is a very fine harbour; the place is very pretty; all the country is covered with beautiful flowers, such as the epacris—it is, in fact, one mass of flowers of every colour and variety, but very little smell. The soil, on which there are a great many flowers, is generally poor; it is thought that this is the cause of the number of flowers, as where land is good grass will grow up and stifle them. There is, however, in this part of Western Australia something

worse than bad land, in the shape of a poisonous shrub, which kills all the sheep and cattle that eat it; unluckily there is a great deal of it.

In five days we arrived at Melbourne; it was charming to see the freshness and healthy look of the people who came on board; there must be something in the climate of Australia which is favourable to good looks. Those born of European parents there, are by far the most beautiful race in the world, possibly living so much upon good beef and mutton may have something to do with it. The view from the harbour of the distant mountains is very fine. It is curious to see chimnies of manufactories in the native forest on the shores of the harbour.

Melbourne is a wonderful place, and has entirely sprung up in less than thirty years. Everything strikes one as being English: there are clubs and other institutions, drinking fountains, not only for men but dogs; there is a Bradshaw, there are penny papers, a Punch, a Bell's Life, an illustrated paper with good engravings, and a newspaper, the Argus, very well conducted, with perhaps the greatest circulation of any paper in the world, except the Times or Telegraph, it is even said that it once had more than the Times, when the gold diggings were at the highest. Melbourne is very well supplied with water from a reservoir about forty miles off. It does not appear to have any sewers under ground, but everything is washed with abundance of water through the streets in huge

open gutters. The sewers at Berlin were once made like this, with only boards to cover them; at Berlin, however, there was nothing like the quantity of water there is at Melbourne.

Any one who had only been in Europe would fancy that in going to a new country he would see only what was new, and that it would differ very much from an old country, but the fact is that a great deal is new in the towns of the old countries—for instance, whole streets in London have been built and entirely altered during this century.

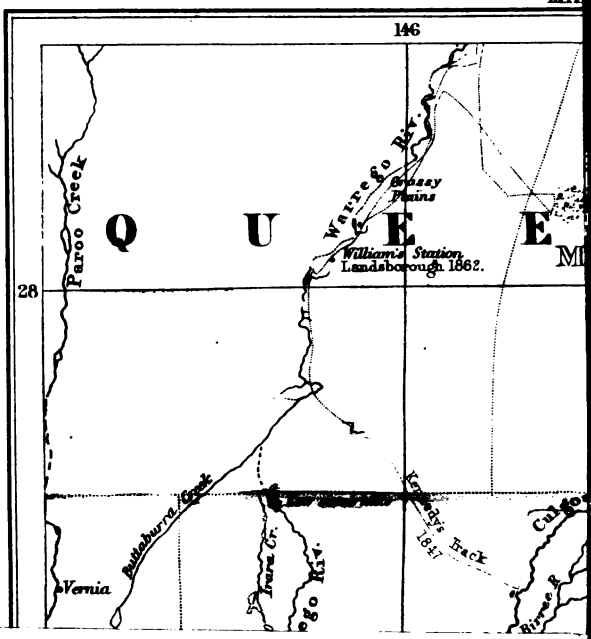
On the voyage from Melbourne to Sydney the coast can be seen almost the whole way: the high range of mountains at the back of Gipps' Land is in winter covered with snow, and is called the Australian Alps.

No one ever tires of the beauty of Sydney Harbour, however often they may have seen it; it is now more beautiful than ever, as very many pretty villas and gardens are scattered about the natural forest and heathy land. In many parts of it ships of almost any draft of water can lie alongside the natural wharves.

Sydney is a bustling town, with very good streets and really fine buildings of hard sandstone. One, however, sees intervals, and particularly corners of streets, which are lying waste, with invariably broken bottles and dead fowls thrown about. Sydney being older than Melbourne, the institutions, such as clubs, are more numerous and perhaps a little superior to Melbourne. The market is worth seeing, if for nothing else at all events for the profusion of fruits, which are

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very good ; the oranges are perhaps the best and largest in the world ; there is a great variety, some sorts having come originally from the Brazils, and others from China. Orange trees thrive in the neighbourhood wonderfully well, and it is no uncommon thing to see 1000 or even 1200 dozen oranges on a single tree. They are the chief winter fruit, but there are also guavas in abundance, loquats, sometimes called Chinese medlars, but tasting more like a cherry, custard apples, and cheremollas, a most excellent South American fruit, it only thrives in a very temperate climate, and will not grow in the tropics on the one hand, nor I believe in any part of the Mediterranean on the other. The summer fruits are apples and pears, plums and peaches in great abundance and variety : the grapes are undeniably the finest in the world, there is nothing like them anywhere else. I happen to have seen the vintage in five different parts of Europe, and I have no hesitation in saying that I have never seen any grapes equal to those in Australia, except under glass in England. The climate is too warm for strawberries, and especially for gooseberries and currants, of which there are very few. A part of the market is entirely given up to the sale of fancy birds, parrots and cockatoos, which are always talking and screaming ; there are occasionally kangaroos and black swans for sale. In many respects Sydney is thoroughly English—there are Hansom cabs and omnibusses, the hotels are large, and some of them very good and



reasonable ; but many people from the country who come to Sydney belong to some of the clubs, where there are bed-rooms, and strangers with good letters of introduction are admitted to the clubs without any subscription for a certain number of weeks, after which, if they continue to reside, they are balloted for, and elected like other members. This is only one instance of the hospitality of the people ; for my own part, I can only say that after an absence of ten years nothing could exceed the kindness with which I was received by those who had known me, of all classes. The people drive about in carriages with servants in liveries, and give as good dinners as can be got in any part of the world.

From Sydney I took the steamer to Newcastle, about sixty miles to the north, it is the great coal port of Australia, as may be guessed by its name. The coal is most plentiful and very good ; engineers say no coal is better for raising steam, but it burns quickly, and is therefore extravagant and not fit for long voyages. Most likely they have not got to the best seams of coal, and are only working those which are nearest the surface. Newcastle not only supplies the whole of Australia with coal, but a great deal is sent to China and California. Perhaps the largest field of bituminous coal yet known in the world is on this Eastern coast of Australia ; it crops out not only at Newcastle but also sixty miles south of Sydney, as well as 100 miles up the river Hunter. Sydney seems to be the centre of

this great coal basin, and probably if deep shafts were sunk coal might be found under the town. Possibly at some time hereafter the valley of the Hunter may be busy with mines, mills, and manufactures, particularly if, as some philosophers think, the English coal-fields should be exhausted.

From Newcastle I went by railway sixty miles up the Hunter. The river does not always run, but there are sometimes very heavy floods, and no doubt tanks and reservoirs might be made in the ravines of the mountains to ensure a supply of water at all times. The country is not suited to English cultivation, and it is not likely that in latitude 33 it should be; wheat is a poor crop and of bad quality, oats are grown to be made into hay, which is very good indeed. The crop of maize is not equal to what it is in many other places. South Australia produces very good wheat, as good perhaps as any in the world, but the crop is a very bad one, being seldom more than 16 bushels an acre. Lucerne thrives wonderfully on the Hunter, the dryness of the country suits it, as it has tap-roots like horse-radish, sometimes 10 or 15 feet in length. These roots can be seen on the banks of the lower part of the river where the tide comes up, and where the steamers have washed away the banks. Vines grow wonderfully well; a really good wine is even now made, although as yet wine making is quite in its infancy. The soil is often volcanic, which is the best there can be for wine. Some of the white wines are

very like the Steinwein of Wurzburg, and some of the red wines are like the famous Spanish wine Val de Peñas, which Sancho Panza was so fond of. Some other wines have very much the taste of Hungarian wines.

From the place where the railway ceases there are coaches for some little distance, and a mail-coach for above 200 miles up the country. The contract pace is 8 miles an hour, but the drivers stop a good deal at different places and make up the time by galloping, which is exciting, and jolts very much; it is no doubt good for the digestion. Wherever there are steep hills or rocks the road has been partially made, but in many places nothing has been done at all, this is very judicious, as the natural road through the forest in dry weather is good. The country is most beautiful, with mountains and rocks on each side of the road, until the foot of the range dividing the eastern and western waters is reached, at a place called Murrurundi. This is a most lovely spot, about 1800 feet above the level of the sea, completely shut in by high mountains. The mail leaves Murrurundi at 1 A.M. It was a most beautiful starlight morning, such as can only be seen in the Southern Hemisphere, where the air is so clear that the whole sky is spangled with white spots, looking almost like one continuous milky way dotted with silvery stars. There is, however, a milky way more marked than in the north. This clearness is perfectly a thing of itself, there is nothing like it in Egypt or

in the Desert. There are also bright spots in the sky, and spots perfectly dark, called the Magelhan clouds. One of the dark Magelhan clouds somewhat emblematically backs up the Southern Cross, which seems to rest softly upon it. The constellations themselves are not so fine as in the North. There is nothing like the Great Bear. Orion, which is common to both hemispheres, is by far the finest cluster of stars in the South. The whole effect of the clear light is most striking.

Ye stars of the South, how lovely ye look
In an atmosphere clear and bright,
When the outspread curtain of heaven is decked
With your spangled silvery light.

The fantastic groups of the stars of the North
Tell tales of poetical lore ;
But the Cross of the South is the sign of a faith
Which is spreading the Southland all o'er.

As that Faith in the darkness of heathen isles
Gives light to benighted man,
So shines that Cross with its softening rays
On the dark clouds of Magelhān.

For millions of years on the wings of light
Through those stars our course should we bend,
And be whirled and whirled in that dizzy height,
We should never be nearer the end ;

Of boundless space and of endless time
It makes the heart flutter to think,
And the strongest minds of the wisest men,
From the awe of the Infinite shrink.

What are ye, what are ye, ye sparkling gems,
Are ye made for us mortals alone ?
Or do ye contain other beings with thoughts
And feelings akin to our own ?

Then may we suppose, like the poet of old,
That the fickle inconstant soul
In Jupiter's belt or enveloped in mist
In the girdle of Saturn may roll.

That the soul of the hard-hearted miserly man,
Who on earth thought of nothing but pelf,
Without friend by his side may be doom'd to exist,
With a beautiful world for himself.

That passionate, violent, hot-headed men,
May be placed in some fiery stars ;
May be scorched in the whiteness of Mercury,
Or parched in the redness of Mars.

Away with such thoughts, it is beauty we see,
And beauty can never give pain ;
After death we shall live in those glittering orbs,
Love and friendship will meet there again.

And there all the evil we knew in this world
Forgotten for ever shall be ;
And all the good we have done or seen
Shall dwell in our memory.

And the children of science shall learn in those spheres
What they never could master below ;
And of boundless space and of endless time,
The laws and the principles know.

From Murrurundi the road goes over the dividing

range and the character of the country changes. There are vast plains towards the interior, and the pasture is more suited to sheep and cattle as a general rule than the land on the Eastern waters. It is, however, more subject to droughts, and should there be the same dry seasons hereafter, which there were twenty or thirty years ago, the country might become almost worthless, as it is now much more heavily stocked with sheep and cattle than before. Besides the droughts, there is another objection to this part of Australia, in some seasons there is a vast quantity of grass seed which gets into the wool and lessens its value. It also goes through the skins of the sheep and very often kills them, particularly if young. It is no uncommon thing to find grass seeds in a leg or shoulder of mutton. The vast interior probably fluctuates between a swamp and a desert, according to the seasons. The fact is, the whole of this part of Australia is subject to what may be called irregular monsoons. There are rainy seasons sometimes for years together, and then there are dry ones. The rain does not come in any particular months of the year, but may set in at any time and so may the droughts.

The birds in Australia migrate not as everywhere else in any particular months of the year, but according to the season whether wet or dry. Some years there are enormous quantities of quail and in the next year in the same months there may be none. Birds of prey, such as kites and kestrels, migrate in the same

way and sometimes come in thousands and seem very hungry, and in other years there are none.

This system of seasons may be fully accounted for by the latitude, which is between the trade-winds and the variables; it occurs to a certain extent in the same latitudes in other places. On the coast of America this zone was once called the horse-latitudes, because ships carrying horses met with uncertain winds and calms, and were kept so long by them that horses died from want of food or water and they had to throw them over, and other people saw them floating in the sea. After long droughts water of course becomes very scarce, and cattle and horses have been known to go from their feed to water as much as 15 or even 25 miles; the cattle died in great numbers and got bogged in the water-holes from weakness, but the horses, owing to their greater speed, did much better.

In very dry seasons there are often hot winds which scorch up fruits and vegetables, actually shrivelling and almost roasting the side of a peach or cabbage which may be exposed to them. The thermometer is said to rise sometimes to 110° in the shade and tin or iron becomes disagreeably hot to the touch; the air is however so dry, that it is not exhausting, but, on the contrary, puts some people in good spirits. Vines can stand a great deal of drought and hot wind, but wheat and even maize get sadly blighted by it.

The great heat is sometimes increased by the burning grass, which is generally lighted by the aborigines

carrying fire about with them ; these fires, when there is a wind, will sometimes burn for days, but if there is no wind, there is almost always a dew at night, which often puts them out. The sight of fires at night is sometimes magnificent, as whole ranges of mountains are lighted up by them. They have a great effect on the character of the country, as they burn many of the young trees, and thus prevent the forest from being too thick. All the country, except when very heavily stocked with sheep, is sure to be burnt at least every two or three years. Botanists say that there are some seeds of the acacias which will not ripen thoroughly with the heat of the sun and air alone, but require fire. It is certain that young acacias spring up luxuriantly where the fires have been under the old trees.

In the rainy seasons, the rains are very heavy, and in many cases where roads or even cattle tracks have worn away the grasses, they tear up the ground and make ravines as much as fifteen feet deep.

It was just beyond this part of the dividing range, where the system of squatting was begun, a subject which has caused so much discussion since. If the reader has not an economic turn of mind, he is recommended to skip, and go on to page 52.

Up to 1829, the settlement of the Colony of New South Wales had been confined by what was termed "the Boundary," being about 150 miles in every direction from Sydney. Within this boundary, grants of

land were made on certain conditions ; and land was also sometimes sold by auction the upset price being 5s an acre.

In 1829 there was a great drought, and an enterprising settler took his cattle to Liverpool Plains, to prevent their being starved. Finding it a better grazing country than that within the boundaries, he kept them there after the drought was over. Many others soon afterwards took their stock beyond the boundary also. They were called Squatters, and were at that time not recognised by the Government, and they went wherever they liked. They soon however began to interfere with one another, and one of the squatters brought an action against another for trespassing on his run. He established the fact, that his sheep and cattle were there first, and the Supreme Court decided that he had a good right against any stranger who intruded.

In 1839 the squatters petitioned to have Commissioners appointed to settle disputed boundaries amongst themselves, they also asked for a police to keep order, and for these advantages they were willing to pay a nominal rent for the land they occupied, and an assessment upon every head of sheep and cattle.

An Act shortly afterwards passed the Legislative Council of New South Wales to this effect, the rent was fixed at £10 for any amount of land in *bond fide* occupation, and the assessment was fixed at 1d a year on sheep and 6d for each head of cattle. Although the squatters had a good tenure as against one another,

they had no rights against the Crown, and were of course liable to be turned out at any time by the Government.

The crown lands of New South Wales, however, and all the revenues derived from them were at this time in the hands of the Home Government, and not of the Executive of the Colony. The squatters had very great confidence in the honour of the Government, they trusted in it, and believed that if any change of the system took place they would be justly and equitably dealt with. On the strength of this they laid out very large sums in fencing, buildings, and other improvements, and in some instances even built comfortable houses for themselves.

The Legislature of New South Wales at this time consisted of one House nominated by the Crown, which was called the Legislative Council. In 1842 a select Committee of this House sat upon the subject of squatting; they heard a good deal of evidence, and came to the conclusion that the existing system was a very bad one, that owing to the bad tenure improvements were not made as they ought to be, and that it also, to a certain extent, had a demoralizing effect on the squatters as it did not give them a settled home.

No steps were however immediately taken. In 1843 the Constitution of New South Wales was altered by an Imperial Act of Parliament, and the Council, instead of consisting entirely of nominated members, was composed of twelve appointed by the Crown, and twenty-

four elected by the people. The squatting districts were however not represented at all in this Council. In 1844 the Government of New South Wales proposed some regulations on the subject, which, however, were never acted upon, except so far as the rent, instead of being, as before, £10 for any amount of land in occupation, was increased to £10 for each portion of land capable of feeding 4000 sheep. This was assumed to be 16,000 acres, unless there was some reason to the contrary, allowing 4 acres to each sheep, which is the usual estimate.

In 1844 a Committee of the newly constituted Council sat, and recommended that each squatter should have a lease for 21 years of the land in his occupation, and should also have the right of pre-emption over it at the fixed price of 5s an acre.

In 1845, the present Lord Derby, who then held the seals of the Colonial Office, wrote a despatch to the Governor of New South Wales, amongst other things suggesting that the squatters should have a lease for 21 years.

In 1846, Lord Grey came into office, and, in 1847, an Act of Parliament was passed enabling the Home Government to make regulations for granting leases and giving the right of pre-emption to the squatters.

By these regulations the lands of the Colony were divided into three parts, "settled," "intermediate," and "unsettled;" the settled contained all the land which has been before described as "within the boundary." It

contained also other patches, of the Colony in addition. A portion of the Colony, about the same size as the settled districts, was called intermediate, and the rest was called unsettled.

With regard to the settled portion it may be left out of the question, as there never had been a system of squatting within the boundary.

In the intermediate districts, the squatters were given a lease for 8 years. The Government, however, had the right of putting up any portion of the lands for auction at the end of any year, at the upset price of not less than £1 an acre; the squatters also were given a right of pre-emption over the whole of their runs, the price to be settled at a valuation, but in no case to be less than £1 an acre. The rent fixed was £10 for every portion of land capable of feeding 4000 sheep, or the equivalent in cattle. This was of course in addition to the assessment for police purposes which had been imposed by the Colonial Legislature.

In the unsettled districts the lease was for 14 years, with the same right of pre-emption, but the Government was not empowered to sell any of the land during the lease. There was also a promise in the regulations to renew the leases for another term, unless one third of the land was sold, or unless it was wanted for other purposes. The renewed rent was in no case to be more than double the old rent.

There were in the regulations also clauses enabling the Government to make reservations for public

purposes, such as roads, sites of towns and villages, burial grounds, and other things.

After this, great improvements were made by the squatters, amounting very often to many thousands of pounds on a run.

The leases were all applied for by the squatters; in some cases the actual deeds of lease were made out, but generally not, as there was no occasion for it, as the squatters held the promises of the leases from the Government, which was a perfectly good title at Equity, as the lawyers term it.

In 1851 that part of New South Wales, then called Port Phillip, was formed into a separate Colony, under the name of Victoria. I may here observe that all that is said about squatting applies only to New South Wales, as the other colonies have each of them different regulations on the subject. On the separation of Victoria it became of course necessary to review the representation of New South Wales, and the squatting districts for the first time sent members to the Council. In 1855 the Imperial Parliament gave a new Constitution to New South Wales, and handed over to its Parliament—now consisting of two Houses instead of one—the control of the Crown lands and revenues, which before were wholly in the hands of the Home Government. A clause, however, was inserted in the Act of Parliament, reserving all the rights of the squatters which they possessed by virtue of any promises or engagements, expressed or implied, made by the Government.

The new Legislature increased the assessment from 1*d* a head on sheep and 6*d* on cattle to £7. 10*s* a thousand on sheep, and the equivalent in cattle; and it was raised not upon the number, as before, of the sheep and cattle actually depastured, but on the capability of the run. Thus, if a squatter had a run capable of holding 20,000 sheep, but actually keeping only 16,000, he was charged upon the former, and not the latter number. The Government also used the proceeds of this assessment not merely for police in the squatting districts, but also for the general expenses of the Colony.

The representation of the Assembly, or Lower House of the Legislature of New South Wales, soon drifted into manhood suffrage. Several attempts were made by the Legislature to settle what was termed the squatting question, and at length, in 1861, two Acts were passed, one called the Crown Lands Alienation Act, and another the Crown Lands Occupation Act, and powers were given to the Executive, under both Acts, to modify them by regulations.

The full right of preemption given to the squatters by the Imperial Act is limited to 640 acres, and to places where improvements have been made to the extent of £1 an acre. The lease is renewed for five years, the rent to be paid according to appraisement; the Government in the first place to appoint an appraiser, and if the squatter likes he may choose another on paying the expenses. If the two cannot agree, an umpire is to be

appointed by the Government. During the lease the Government has the power of selling the whole, or any portion of the land. Any one has a right to select freely on any part of the squatter's run (except where there are improvements to the amount of at least £1 an acre) any portion between 40 and 320 acres, and he is allowed the right of using, exclusively for grazing purposes, three times as much more. The free selector only pays 5s an acre, but is under conditions to reside upon and improve the land to the extent of £1 an acre by the end of three years, at which time, if the conditions have not been complied with, the land is forfeited; and if they have been complied with, the free selector may either pay 15s more and get a grant of the land, or let the 15s an acre remain at 5 per cent., which is about half the current rate of interest for mortgages in the colony.

It has thus been endeavoured to give a slight sketch of what is called the squatting system, as it may be interesting to some readers.

It may be asked, how any one can be induced to undertake grazing under so bad a tenure, particularly as it is well known to all who are engaged in it that the capital required is very great, and it does not answer to pay interest on borrowed money. The profits also are very moderate, and the risks from seasons, either much too wet or much too dry, are very great.

The fluctuations in the price of wool are also very considerable, and it is occasionally sold at ruinous

prices. In 1848, for instance, a great deal of Australian wool must have been sold in London for less than it cost in expenses of shearing and carriage, in other words it would have been better to have left the wool on the sheep's backs. The reasons why people continue grazing are probably as follows:—They have had possession of the runs for many years, and there is great confidence amongst them that they will never be turned out. This arises from several reasons. As land probably will never be sold for less than £1 an acre it is impossible that any one can buy it for grazing purposes, it takes four acres to keep a sheep, and as a sheep is never worth £1 and the profit is now small, if land were bought it would be reduced so much that grazing would not pay.

With regard to the free selectors, as the climate and soil of the grazing districts are unfit for cultivation, as even for the first year or two very poor crops are produced and the land soon wears out, there is not much fear of the free selectors ever taking much land. Indeed, it is a very general observation that if a man undertakes agriculture, without any other pursuit, he is almost sure to be what is termed "cleaned out" in three years. Practically, there are not many free selectors. Irish and German emigrants have both of them a sort of passion for land, and are willing to get less profit and live harder as cultivators of their *own* land than they would if otherwise employed. Englishmen are not so commonly free selectors, and it is said

there is scarcely an instance of a lowland Scot, who is perhaps the best of all colonists, taking to it.

The great evil of the present system is not so much with reference to the Squatters as with regard to the colony itself. The Squatters of course will make no improvements unless they amount to at least £1 an acre, as under that sum so far from being protected, if they improved the land, it would be an inducement for any one else to buy it or select it. In some instances selections have been made in fields fenced in, but these cases are rare. Thus all divisions of flocks and herds by means of fences which might be most advantageous is practically prohibited. In some places it would be very desirable to drain the land and thus make the country more available, but this would not cost £1 an acre over the whole space benefited by it and is thus prohibited. Cases also have occurred where Squatters have dug wells or made dams, and reservations have been made by the Government from the leases in consequence. On the one hand I know myself of thousands of acres which might be drained to great advantage on the same cheap system as is done in some of the Scotch Highlands, viz., by cutting open drains in little valleys in the hills and allowing the water to wash them deeper. But as this would not cost £1 an acre it would give no security, and would be an inducement to others to select the land. It is true that the first five years' lease is promised to be extended to ten years at the existing rent, if the Squatter shall have

improved the land so much as to make it capable of carrying twice as much stock as before ; but this would not secure him against sale, free selections, or any one of the numerous reservations in the lease, by means of which the Government might at any time take possession of the land. Perhaps the working-classes in Australia may some day or other open their eyes and see that it would be enormously to their advantage that labour should be employed in improvements.

Possibly the day may not be very far distant when the manufacturers in Yorkshire may feel a scarcity of wool, as now that the whole of Australia available for grazing purposes is occupied, unless the land is improved they will not find the quantity increasing every year as has been the case now for a very long period.

I have purposely avoided entering at large into more details with regard to the Squatting question, as they would extend to a very great length ; the two acts of the Legislature and the Government regulations founded upon them being very voluminous. I have also purposely endeavoured, as much as possible, to avoid anything like a political discussion. The whole has been written entirely from memory, but the facts, so far as anything important is concerned, may be relied on as being correct.

Towards the north the dividing range spreads out into a table land, which is from 3000 to 6000 feet above the level of the sea. This, from being cooler and greener than the lower country, is called New England.

The productions also are more like those of England. Apples, pears, and plums, thrive remarkably well ; the peaches are the largest and best flavoured in the world ; the trees grow from stones, and always produce a variety more or less good. Sometimes there are plenty of strawberries, and even currants and gooseberries. In some seasons every kind of fruit is grown in the same garden, from a gooseberry to a pomegranate. Potatoes are often a good crop, and almost all other vegetables are abundant, but wheat, barley, and oats are sorry crops in dry seasons, and sometimes fail altogether.

Some of the English trees, such as elms and oaks, do very well. It is pleasing to see how people have taken pains to grow these English trees. This is from the natural love of the scenes of their early days. Upon the same principle they give the names of the places which they well knew in England to their new homes, and call the rivulets by English names, such as the Severn.

“—— Parvum Simoin simulataque magnis,
Pergama et arentem Xanthi cognomine ripam.”

The climate is perhaps the finest in the world, and the dryness of it is most extraordinary. I have known old boxes split, and have seen the stock of a gun, thirty years old, shrink with it.

In winter there are often hard frosts at night, but they are always followed by bright sunshiny days ; and the air is so dry and bracing that no one feels the cold. In many cases asthma is completely cured. Consump-

tive persons often get strong and active while they live on the table land.

There are sometimes sharp frosts even in the summer mornings ; enough to hurt cucumbers, melons, and potatoes. The rain-fall is much greater than in the low country, and hitherto, since New England has been known, now about thirty years, there has been no serious drought. It may, however, be remarked, that at all events for the last twenty years there has been no drought in any part of Australia at all like what there formerly used to be. There has been of late years a great deal too much rain in New England, which has seriously injured the sheep. It made the hoofs of their feet grow enormously, and become in fact diseased ; and in some instances it caused even the rot which is so fatal to sheep.

The rainy seasons, however, were over at the end of 1864, and the weather has been dry since. Some of the streams run in all seasons. There is a story of a young lady who came up to the table land from Sydney. She crossed a running river for the first time in her life ; it almost frightened her. Many of the English clovers and grasses have been tried on the table land, but none have done well except the white clover, which also thrives in many other parts of Australia, and in some cases is overgrowing and smothering the native grasses. I sowed the white clover first in New England in 1841, but it never spread very much until bees were taken up there. It is well known that many

plants do not seed well without bees, but perhaps in this case the wet seasons, which began about the same time, may have had much to do with it.

In the spring the flowers all over the country, and particularly on the plains, are most beautiful. They are to be seen in large patches of blue, white, and yellow, like an enormous flower garden.

The country generally on the table land is a very open forest, with plains here and there. On some of the ridges the trees are much thicker, and the ground is covered with beautiful flowering shrubs. There is also fine timber, fit for almost anything, in these ridges. The trees are almost all of the genus *myrtaceæ*, such as the *eucalyptus* (gum-tree) and the *angofera*. They have scented leaves, and flowers like huge myrtles. They are in themselves very pretty, but the number makes them monotonous. There are other trees occasionally, like pines and cypresses, sometimes very pretty.

On the eastern slopes of the table land, towards the sea, there are what are called brushes, or scrubs; in fact they are jungles. In these there is an infinite variety of every kind of vegetation, and some of the trees are deciduous. These jungles are full of flowering shrubs, woodbines, and magnificent trees. They are most beautiful. There are also great numbers and varieties of gaudy birds. One of the birds is called the Bell bird. He is a great favourite with explorers and travellers, as he always gives notice of water. This little beautiful bird is sometimes very

useful, as it not unfrequently happens that people are lost in the forest, and die for want of water. A sad case of a man being lost happened in 1845, on one of my own runs. A gentleman left a settlement called Armadale, for the purpose of going to the western part of the table land. He had, as is often the case, two horses with him. He was not heard of for some time, but there was nothing very remarkable in this, as there was but little communication between Armadale and the place he was going to. Afterwards both his horses came back; but it was thought to be a very curious thing that they did not come back together, as two horses are scarcely ever known to separate. This aroused suspicions as to his having been robbed and made away with, as it was supposed he had money with him. Due inquiries were accordingly made, and amongst other things some of the aboriginal blacks reported that they had seen a white man dead in the river. This, however, was very shortly cleared up, as it was found out that a man had been drowned in a flood. There were also several other stories about dead bodies having been seen; but all were accounted for—violent deaths being very common when a new country is first settled. Some months afterwards my stockman, when looking for some cattle, found a complete suit of clothes close to a sheep station which was at that time not occupied. These clothes turned out to have belonged to the missing man, and in the pockets were found all the money he was known to have taken

with him. Some months afterwards the bones of a white man were found in a glen about half a mile from the sheep station, which was then again occupied. The skull was very shortly afterwards identified by the loss of two front teeth. It was remarked that a very peculiar knife, which he always carried with him, had not been found, but this was shortly afterwards picked up on the side of the brook, not far from the sheep station. Of course the agonies of the unfortunate man, and all that he silently suffered in that lonely but beautiful glen, must for ever remain a secret ; but from what has been known to have happened in other cases, we may surmise as follows :—The country through which he had to go was very intricate and mountainous, and was at that time almost entirely unoccupied ; it was without roads, and almost without cattle tracks. One of my shepherds was afterwards lost in the same part of the country, and was without food for eight days. It appeared afterwards that he had wandered round and round, and probably had never been five miles from the station. There can be no doubt that the unfortunate man whose bones were found, had lost his way, and had come upon the sheep station, expecting to find it occupied, in which case all his troubles would have been over. Finding it deserted, it is probable that the disappointment brought on a nervous fever, which made him take off his clothes and wander away without them. I have myself known instances where persons who have been lost in Australia have been found without any

clothes on, but in these cases it was presumed that they had taken them off from heat or thirst. This could not have been the case in the present instance, as it was very frosty weather, in the depth of winter, and there was plenty of water everywhere, and even a brook where the clothes were found. People, when they become mad, often do take off their clothes; and it may be remembered by some of my readers that Ariosto describes Orlando, on his first attack of madness, as having taken off his clothes. With regard to the knife which was found some distance off, it may be surmised that the poor man had been tempted to commit suicide with it, and had thrown it away on purpose. Whatever was the cause, it is a sad tale; and the sufferings of the poor man must have been fearful as he died in the lonely forest.

It is somewhat remarkable that he was one of three brothers who went out together to Australia, and that the two others died violent deaths. One was drowned in attempting nobly to rescue a fellow-passenger who had fallen overboard on their arrival in Sydney harbour; the other was speared by the blacks, being the very last to leave a position where the party was defending itself; and by his courage he probably saved the lives of the others, who had time to get away. But violent deaths are little thought of in the first settlement of a new country. As an illustration of this, it may be mentioned that in the statistics of Queensland, which are most accurately kept, it appears that

in the country districts of that Colony very nearly 25 per cent. of the deaths of males are recorded to be by violence.

The geological formation, like that of many high lands, consists very much of granite and whinstone, with a great deal of the scoræ of extinct volcanoes. There are also vast fields of ironstone, which, they say, can be smelted by being stacked with wood, and set fire to at night in a gully, with the wind blowing up it. I have been told that iron is thus produced in some parts of Africa, and there is a tradition that the famous Toledo blades used to be made from ironstone treated in this manner. At all events there is nothing very new in this process, as it is described by Hesiod. It is very likely that iron procured in this way would be good, because only the best part might be smelted.

Gold, in more or less quantities, is very much distributed over the table land. In some cases it is worth working. The diggers get it by washing the gravel in the beds of brooks, by means of buckets, pans, or what are called cradles. They keep taking out the top of the gravel until the gold, being the heaviest, remains at the bottom. By this process they get the whole of the gold, some of which is as fine as flour. If there is only one speck in a bucket, an experienced digger is sure to find it. They sometimes find rubies and sapphires all of which are pretty, and some, particularly the blue sorts, are valuable.

The animals on the table-land are very like those in

the low country. They are all marsupial, that is, they have a pouch like opossums. The only exception is the wild dog, which possibly may have been brought there by the black natives. There are kangaroos of all sizes, but the larger sorts are getting scarce, not perhaps so much from being killed, as from being driven away by sheep, which pick out the sweetest of the grasses.

There are great varieties of parrots, some of which are called trichoglossic; they have tongues with something like hairs at the points, with this they suck honey out of the flowers. Many of the other birds are very much the same as in England, but some of them, such as swallows, kites, kestrels and plovers, are rather a smaller variety; in no case are there any precisely like those in England. There is a large owl, which makes a noise like a cuckoo all night. Bustards are plentiful, and in the proper seasons there are great varieties of quail. There are wild ducks and small wild geese, teal and widgeons in great variety. The snipes are very large, about the size of the old solitary snipe of England which is now a rare bird. The snipes come in great quantities in August, equivalent to February in the Northern Hemisphere; most of them soon go away, but sometimes in the middle of the summer a good many of them appear for a day or two at a time, when they are very fat and are easily shot. The snipes are almost the only birds that migrate with any sort of regularity with regard to the time of year.

It is not easy to say where they go to breed in the spring, as, with the exception of the Australian Alps and some of the high lands of Van Diemen's Land, there is nothing cooler than New England, and snipes are not very plentiful in either of these places. Can it be possible that they go to the unexplored land nearer the South Pole?

There are plenty of snakes, some of which are venomous and many are no doubt wrongfully accused of it. I have lived a good deal on the table land and never knew any harm done by them, except on one occasion, when a sheep and a lamb were killed by a small snake, which was almost taken in the act. It is said that those snakes which are found furthest from water are the most venomous; upon the whole it is best to be at peace with them and leave them alone, unless you have a double-barrelled gun in your hand, when war should be proclaimed at once. If attacked with a stick you should always go in front of them; they move forwards slowly, but can swing their whole length backwards, using their tails as a sort of pivot. There is a moral in this. Deal openly with all, even with those who are bad.

With regard to insects there are, as in all parts of Australia, great varieties of ants, some of which are very large and sting sharply, but the pain soon goes off. There are, except in some peculiar seasons, scarcely any mosquitoes, and the nights are too cold for them to be busy much after sunset. There are very

small indigenous bees which make a little honey; the blacks are said to find it by catching a bee and gumming a feather to him and turning him loose, they can thus see him some little distance, when lost sight of they catch another and thus at last find the honey. Boys in England find wasps' nests in the same way, by running after a wasp towards sunset when he is going to his nest, and when they have lost sight of him waiting for another. The wasp is so much larger than the Australian bee that they can be seen without the feather. There is a kind of hornet which catches spiders and puts them into a cell made of mud, it then lays an egg and closes up the end; the young hornet is hatched and lives upon the spider until he becomes a chrysalis. These hornets are troublesome, as they are fond of making their cells in key-holes and any corners about a room.

Some of the butterflies are beautiful, very large and of a dark blue colour; some are very like English butterflies, such as the Painted Lady, the Nettle Tortoiseshell and the pretty little blue butterflies which are seen often upon downs. In some seasons myriads of white butterflies are seen flying to the north-east for two or three days together, almost as thick as snow. Some of the insects have their wings as it were set the wrong way, they run very fast, but when they try to fly are, what sailors call, "taken aback," and lose all the ground they have gained by running. A pretty fable might be made out of this: it might be read with

advantage at the Stock Exchange, or hung up in the board-room of a financial company.

There are insects which are called in Australia locusts, but they are not at all like them; they are the "Tettix" of the ancient Greeks, and make a shrill chirping noise on the trees; they are very loud and deafening, but the noise is not like that of old men as Homer has it, but perhaps more like old women. The larva is like that of a dragon-fly and comes out of the earth, leaving a round hole; it climbs up a stem or a tree a short way, and when dried with the sun and air the skin bursts, and the perfect insect flies away. I never saw the insect in Greece, as I was never there in the summer. I have heard there are specimens of what is called the Golden Grasshopper, which the Athenians wore in their hair, and that it is exactly like the Australian locust. It will be remembered that they wore them as tokens of their being the aboriginal inhabitants of Attica, and of having sprung out of the earth.

There is a story of a new comer, who had just bought a sheep-station, being frightened at the word locust, fancying that they would eat all his grass; he was told, however, by one of his shepherds that they were quite harmless, and that they only sat upon the trees and sung till they burst. Like many other perfect insects they do not seem to eat anything. There is, however, a grasshopper which is really a small locust,

and is sometimes very troublesome, but there are not many on the table land.

There never were many of the black aborigines on the table land; they almost always prefer the neighbourhood of the sea or waters where there is fish, of which there is not much on the table land. Where they get plenty of fish they are taller and stronger; on the table land they are short, but thick set, and active like most people who live on high lands. They are decreasing, but not very rapidly. They are all quite black, but have long straight hair unlike most of the African blacks. Drunkenness and the bad habits which unfortunately they have learnt from civilization no doubt have a tendency to kill them, but change of habits and food, as they now eat beef and bread instead of opossums and flying squirrels, may disagree with them also.

There is a story of some blacks who were taken from Tasmania to an island in Bass' Straits; they were well treated by the Government and allowed a very handsome ration; they, however, died very fast, and a surgeon in the navy suggested that regular habits did not agree with them, that they had always been accustomed to hunt for their food, and that some days they had good luck with the opossums and got what they called a tightener, and that they sometimes got very little for days together. He suggested therefore that they should not be fed so regularly. The trial was

made, and it is said that they ceased to die. The blacks are in many respects a very curious race. They are perfect savages, without house or home; they never think of cultivating the land; they sleep every night without any shelter at all unless it rains, when they stick two forked poles in the ground, with a pole laid horizontally on the top, and put sheets of bark which they strip from trees on either side. Their weapons are only clubs, boumerangs and wooden spears, with the ends sometimes burnt a little to make them harder; they can be thrown with some accuracy and with force enough to go through a man. When they fight they are very clever at jumping out of the way of a spear, but it is not easy for them to get out of the way of a boumerang. Their tomahawks, until they got iron ones from the colonists, were made of stone; they are very superior to the flint hatchets now found in such quantities in many parts of Europe. They used the stone tomahawk chiefly to strip bark and cut small holes in trees, making something like a little ladder to enable them to climb up and get the opossums and flying squirrels which live in holes in the trees. They seldom got any of the kangaroos. They never boiled any of their food, as they had no vessels to resist fire. They roasted opossums whole, with the fur on, and they thought they were enough cooked when they burst. They even now, when they go from one place to another, often take fire with them, as they have some difficulty in getting a light; they do not get a spark

by striking two stones together, but make a small hole in the side of a kind of cane called grass-tree, they put the sharpened end of another grass-tree into the hole, and move it rapidly round when, by the help of a little dried grass and bark, they get it to take fire. It is rather hard work for a short time, and they do not like it. There is nothing new in this means of getting fire, as it is described by an Arabian poet and quoted in the July number of the *Edinburgh Review*, 1866, p. 3: "A fly sitting on a blade of grass, and rubbing its fore legs together, just as a man with mutilated arms would roll a stick in the round orifice of wood to produce a flame."

They often, however, now get lucifer matches. Some say they were cannibals, but this is improbable, as unlike the New Zealanders they had always plenty of animal food, and one would suppose that opossums and flying squirrels, although tasting a little of gum leaves, are quite as delicate as black men and women. Some years ago when I lived in New England, I took a great deal of pains to try and find out from the blacks whether they had any natural religion or not. I believe they have no idea of a God, that is, a supreme creator and preserver, nor have they any belief in a future state. They certainly had some superstitions and a slight notion of spirits, but this was chiefly confined to the younger among them.* They had some ceremo-

* In Baker's *Nyanza* it will be found that he has come to the same conclusion with regard to the African blacks. See vol. i. p. 247 and 321, and ii. p. 212.

nies, such as knocking out the two upper front teeth of young men, but even this was not always done on the table land. They had occasionally great meetings to which tribes used to come some distance, perhaps from sixty to seventy miles, but there might not have been anything religious in these meetings.

Their language, like that of many other savages, such as the black inhabitants of the Pacific Islands and the negroes on the Upper Nile,* varies a great deal, so much so that they often cannot understand tribes who live 100 miles off. I used to take a boy with me from one of my stations to another, a distance of 180 miles, and before he got half way he used to talk to the blacks he met in English; he told me he knew some of their words, but it was easier for both to talk in English. They learn English very quickly and some of them talk it really well and fluently. It is a curious fact that they learn it very much faster than the Chinese shepherds and labourers who go to Australia, although the Chinese are very intelligent and can almost always read and write. The fact is, the blacks learn everything quickly: they soon ride very well; they are fond of horses and take care of them very fairly, they thus make themselves useful in long journeys. They are light-weights, and are very good hands at finding stray horses and cattle. Their way of tracking animals seems at first to be almost miraculous, but the art is soon learnt by Englishmen; it

* See Baker's Nyanza, vol. ii. p. 315.

consists chiefly in not looking down upon the ground for the tracks, but in casting the eye a good deal forward, and trying to see what is called the turn of the leaf of either grass or bushes, thus an animal can often be tracked at a hand-canter. If the grass is long nothing is easier than tracking in a dewy morning. Some Englishmen can track as well as the blacks.

They sometimes will shepherd sheep for some weeks together, and for a few days will often work hard at sheep-washing or other things, but they do not like the same employment for a long time together. It seems wonderful that a race so quick at learning things should have remained perfect savages; the only suggestion on this head must be, that they may have all the organs of imitation without those of invention: this seems to be the case.

After all there is something very fine in the true savage in the wilderness. There is a kind of gentlemanlike ease about his manners. Not all the drill sergeants in Europe can make a man hold himself as the savage does, who never has stooped to a desk or a plough. There is also a natural grace about their carriage, and the little dress they have. A black woman throws an opossum cloak over her shoulders with a grace which all the Modistes of Paris could not imitate, and she would never dream of wearing anything so ugly as a spoon-bonnet, or enduring high-heeled boots.

Such is the aboriginal black of Australia, whose race like many others is probably doomed to be swept

away by our own advancing civilisation. It is a somewhat melancholy fact that we are at this moment destroying several races of mankind. The red Indian of America, with his activity and great endurance, is passing away. The low typed Boshman and the Hottentot, and perhaps even the Caffre, may at some time or other, disappear. Besides these races and the Australian black, the warlike New Zealander will probably not survive more than a few generations. It is not, however, the first time that this has happened. There is little doubt that the Greek colonists of the Mediterranean destroyed aboriginal races and possibly called them Satyrs.

In India and Ceylon there are still remains of aboriginal races of a very low type, some of which live partly in trees. Our excuse must be that we are introducing a state of society which makes mankind happier, and amongst other things that whereas with almost all these races women are treated very much like slaves, amongst ourselves they occupy their proper position in society.

The whole of Australia is subject to very heavy thunderstorms, but on the table land much more than any other part of it. A single storm will sometimes strike upwards of 100 trees; the lightning seems to come out of the ground and tear the trees up by the roots, scattering huge splinters all around, in some cases as far as 100 yards or more. Whenever a tree is struck a thin blue mist may be seen for a few seconds afterwards.

If the country were thoroughly peopled, no doubt many would be struck by lightning; as it is, some people are killed, occasionally two and even three at a time by one flash. The greatest danger is from the splinters of the trees. Cattle and horses in thunderstorms, it is supposed to avoid them, always make for a plain if near. There is sometimes thunder and even lightning without any rain at all, it is called dry thunder. I have heard disputes about sheet lightning, some saying that it is merely the reflection of forked lightning at a distance; on the table land, however, I have actually been surrounded by sheet lightning, with only a single cloud over my head and a very few drops of rain. The sun had set some time, and the sheet lightning made everything around, from 200 to 300 yards, almost as light as day. The effect was very beautiful. In thundery weather there are sometimes whirlwinds, which are in fact hurricanes on a small scale; they are about half a mile wide, and tear any tree to pieces that comes in the way, throwing it down in every direction, thus proving that they are circular storms; they have been traced as far as 70 miles. The course is nearly always from N.W. to S.E.

There is a great deal of attempt at cultivation on the table land, but the soil is upon the whole poor, and the climate from late frosts and other causes is not suitable to the growth of wheat. Very few people, if any, depend entirely upon cultivation for their living; but it is often undertaken by men who are carriers or have other employments. The whole country is used for grazing

sheep and cattle ; the cattle are allowed to run entirely loose, they would, of course, thrive much better if different ages and sexes were kept in large paddocks, but as has been before explained the tenure of land does not admit of any such improvement. It is thought also by some that sheep would thrive better in paddocks ; and many people in Queensland, where the land regulations admit of it, have grazed them in paddocks with great success. As it is, the sheep are kept in large flocks, sometimes as many as 2000, and even more together. They have, of course, nothing but the natural grass to feed on, but in dry seasons they thrive very well indeed. They are kept chiefly for their wool, which is fine Merino, and is used a good deal by the French and Belgians to make a very soft material for ladies dresses. Before shearing they are washed, and whenever it can be done by what is called a spout. The water is dammed up, sometimes as far as a mile and a half or two miles ; a little cascade is made, and each sheep after being well soaked is passed under it ; as many as 1500 sheep, and even more, can be washed in this manner in a day. The sheep become dry in two or three days, and are then shorn in the usual manner. The wool is packed tight in bales with a very powerful lever or screw press, and is then fit to be sent to the nearest port. This is done on two wheeled trucks, called drays. In the lambing time, tents or temporary huts are put up in the most open places, and folds made of hurdles, or what are called bough yards, are made to

keep the ewes and lambs in their different stages apart during the night. In the morning they are driven out to feed in small flocks, and when the lambs are from four to seven days old they are put together in one flock. This is done exactly in the same way in Greece, and may be seen in the neighbourhood of Athens; the only difference is that in Greece they milk the ewes to make cheese. At different times contagious diseases, sometimes very fatal, have sprung up amongst the sheep and cattle. As the sheep are kept separate these diseases amongst them have very generally been stamped out by destroying the infected flock, or not allowing them to communicate with any other sheep. As the cattle are allowed to run loose it is impossible to prevent contagious diseases spreading amongst them. Of late years a disease, called Pleuropneumonia, has spread frightfully and is most destructive; in riding over the country one is hardly ever out of the sight or out of the smell of a dead beast.

Until lately almost every one used to travel over the table land on horseback, and if they had much baggage they used to take a pack-horse with them. The roads, however, are now so much improved that it is easy to go on wheels. American four-wheeled wagons are the best carriages for the purpose, as they are strong and light. Thirty or forty miles a day may be made easily with a pair of horses for some days together. The Australian horses are chiefly the offspring of good English horses, for it never could have been worth while to

pay a heavy freight for a bad one. There is also a great deal of Arab blood from horses brought from India direct, but originally from the Persian Gulf. At different times also a great many mares have been brought from Valparaiso, these are of Barb blood. All are good breeds, and amongst them they make up the Australian horse; this animal has very odd qualities, perhaps somewhat owing to his motley breed, and a good deal no doubt to bad breaking and management. He stumbles, not only in a gallop, canter, trot or walk, but sometimes nearly falls down when standing still, perhaps from sleepiness; he shys, plunges and buck-jumps, he is often very lazy. He has every kind of trick, some will not allow themselves to be caught without a great deal of trouble; others will get into or out of any fields by some means or other; and some have been known to get over a stock-yard fence nine feet high! Such a horse would, of course, in England fetch any sum of money for his performances. Notwithstanding all these faults, he is perhaps the most useful horse in the world; he is good tempered, has good and easy paces, very seldom has anything the matter with him, unless he gets the gripes from being improperly fed upon new maize, or having been given water impregnated with coal or ironstone, which is not his fault. He is never broken-winded or a roarer. He never has string-halt, splints, spavins, kerbs, or anything the matter with his feet, although he is ridden full gallop over ground as hard as a turnpike road and

over rocks and shingles ; he is perhaps the most enduring horse in the world, thrives well upon poor pasture, and if turned out and allowed to go where he like, he gets fat in six weeks. The horses I went with were wonderfully good, but amongst other tricks they used to bite one another severely, and took a particular delight in doing so when going down steep pinches.

The whole scenery on the table land is surpassingly beautiful, open park-like forests, glades, plains, deep valleys, half plains, half park-like, bold rocks, ravines, mountains, and magnificent views from their tops, often over from 60 to 100 miles of waving forests. There are now and then streams of perfectly clear water, cascades, waterfalls, and sometimes very large reaches in the streams, which might almost be called lakes. On the eastern slope of the table land there are enormous chasms, leading towards the rivers McLeay and Clarence. They are very much finer than the Via Mala in the pass of the Splugen, and extend for upwards of 150 miles. After heavy rains the cascades which fall into them are magnificent. Some parts of the country are covered with sweet-scented Acacias and other flowering shrubs in great varieties, almost all of which would be highly prized in an English greenhouse. In short, the whole scenery, combined with the clear bracing atmosphere, is at all events the most pleasing in the world. The only thing that is wanting is colouring, probably the air is too rarified to give such colours as are seen in the tropics, and in some parts of

the Mediterranean. It is true that there are no ruins, or associations of classical or other legends, but this must be made up for by the contemplation of the beauty of nature untouched by the hand of man, and "from nature up to nature's God." No one who has not seen it can have any idea of the beauty of untouched luxuriant nature. No wonder that those who are born in such a beautiful country should amongst their many other good qualities have a love for it, and, wherever they may be, speak of it with an affection, which is seldom expressed with regard to any other country, by an American or any one else. The whole is almost entirely in a state of nature; there are a few townships and villages with some nice houses in them, chiefly inns and stores, generally built of wood; there are also a few free selectors here and there, with wood and bark huts. The owners of sheep and cattle some years ago were building stone and brick houses and fencing in large paddocks, but owing to the bad tenure before alluded to, little has been done by them of late years. One of the most beautiful spots of the table land is at the north end, where the first step off it begins, this is half in New South Wales and half in Queensland. It was here that, in 1842, before any one had been there, I went with an exploring party of four. When we got a distant view of Darling Downs, which is now a part of Queensland, we had nothing left to eat, and I went by myself alone for about 25 miles towards the Downs. We knew that there was a river (the Condamine) there,

and that there were some settlers who had got there by another route. I never enjoyed a ride so much in my life. The pleasure of going alone over ground untrodden before, save by the wild beast and savage, was overwhelming, and as I rode along I mused on the future of this new land, whether it might be covered at some time or other with vines and olives ; and whether in the quiet peaceful dale through which I passed some fierce battle might be fought. The excitement of it was delightful—the best run I ever saw was nothing to it. I had a first-rate horse, and galloped the whole way, wherever rocks and ravines did not prevent me. I got to a settlement in about three hours. The first sign of civilization that I saw was an English weed called fat hen, or sometimes lambstongue, which spreads very fast and makes a good spinach. I then saw sheep tracks, and shortly after a shepherd, who pointed out the way to the settlement. It was indeed a glorious afternoon, most exciting and charming, I shall never see the like again. The other three of the party arrived safely the next afternoon, and were very hungry.

Farewell beautiful table land of Australia ! There is much that is beautiful in this beautiful world. The foliage of England, the wild heaths and lakes of Ireland and Scotland, the garden cultivation of parts of France and Italy, the cork woods and snow-clad sierras of Andalusia, the richness of Sicily, with its ruins and old associations, the wonderful colouring towards sunset of the Greek Islands, and above all the rich tropical

vegetation of the southern islands of the Indian Archipelago, with their groves of bananas, cocoa-nut trees and tamarinds, their lofty volcanic mountains and beautiful race of Malays; this is the fairy land of the Arabian nights, where the old man of the sea jumped upon Sinbad's back, where the merchants of Bagdad traded, and have left to this day strong traces of their customs and religion. To my mind, however, there is nothing so charming in climate and scenery combined, as the table land of Australia. I cannot take leave of it without expressing my gratitude to old friends of all classes, who, after an absence of ten years, received me with the greatest kindness and good will. This was indeed a pleasure.

Old England's homes are lovely
In their sheltered leafy dells,
With the tree lark's morning melody,
And the peal of the evening bells.

The wild bee sucks the honey dew
From the scented groves of lime,
In the old Cathedral's close,
In the soft north summer's clime.

I have seen Killarney's ranges,
Mellow with purple haze,
And under the bright-leaved strawberry tree
The red deer's startled gaze.

Ullswater's rugged rockiness
And the softness of Windermere,
And where the breath of the Highlands
Is bracing, mild and clear.

Bright are the banks of the Loire,
In the land of gladdening wine,
Where the bloom on the peaches is kissed
By the tendrils of the vine.

Grenada's snow Sierras
Send down their silver rills,
To Alhambra's glowing gardens,
And ice water the fountain fills.

I have seen the richness of Sicily,
And the ruins that tell the story
Of bygone days of revellings,
Of Beauty, Taste and Glory.

The seas of Greece are sparkling
With "countless dimpled smiles,"
As the gorgeous colours are basking
On the rocks of the taleful Isles.

I have seen that fairy land
Far away in the Eastern seas,
Where the wave-wafted Coco is rocked
And nursed by the ocean breeze.

Where dark blue lofty peaks
Look down upon fruit-bearing glades,
And gay and light-hearted are tripping
Malaya's voluptuous maids.

But it gives me the spirit of youth,
And makes me feel fresh as a child,
To gallop alone in the Forest
In the boundless Australian Wild.

There nature's varying harmonies
The raptured senses strike,
With no two rocks, with no two trees,
With no two leaves alike.

Welcome to thirsty travellers
The bell-bird's note is calling,
As down the dark ravine
The white cascade is falling.

In nature's unpruned bowers
The birds they chirp and sing,
And the butterfly sips from the flowers
And flits on his pencilled wing.

The Wildman in the wilderness
Is a goodly sight to see,
He never has stooped to desk or plough,
With his limbs and his bearing free.

Upon his helpmate's shoulders
The fur cloak softly lies,
As it with simple artlessness
Had fallen from the skies.

Not all the skill of drapery,
With silk and labored lace,
Can deck the courtly beauty
With the child of Nature's grace.

What though there is no mountain nymph,
No Naiad of the vale,
No lore of Grecian poesy,
Or Northman's ghostly tale—

Borne on the winds o'er flood and fell
No restless spirit sweeps;
Dissolved into a waterfall
No love-worn maiden weeps—

Still in this realm of beauty,
As was and e'er has been,
Enshrined in Nature's loveliness,
There is a Great UNSEEN.

The all-creating Sun
Is beaming forth his glory,
The speechless earth is telling
The wonders of the story—
I have dozed in the lonely forest,
In the shade of an aged tree,
And visions were floating around me
Of the future of Australie.
I heard the hum of cities
And the drone of busy mills,
I saw the citron and olive,
And cheering vine-clad hills.
I heard the crackle of arms,
And smelt a stifling smoke,
The grass was all burning around me,
In the midst of a fire I woke.
Sweet are the dreams of happiness,
And sad the thoughts of strife,
Oh ne'er in a land so lovely
May such sorrow be brought into life.
May each spark that might burst into flame,
And brother 'gainst brother be driven,
Be quenched like the fire in the forest,
By the gentle dews of Heaven.
Then blessings upon thee, Australia,
May thy destiny ne'er be forlorn,
'Tis the land of the beautiful south,
'Tis the land where my children were born.

The Darling Downs lie north of the table land, and are about 1800 feet above the level of the sea. The climate is much warmer than that of the table land; this

can be seen at once by the natural productions, the only real means of judging of a climate, one's own feelings are very little help, as the weather may for the time have changed. As soon as you enter Queensland there is a marked difference in the appearance of the buildings and houses; the townships instead of being built of wood, as is very much the case on the table land of New South Wales, are built chiefly of brick and stone, and there is a much greater air of comfort about the people and country. There are also great numbers of fields or large paddocks fenced in with wood and wire.

Queensland, up to the year 1860, was a part of New South Wales; it had been more or less settled for twenty years, but had languished all the time. After it got a Government of its own, it seemed to spring into prosperity as if by magic. The population in 1860 was about 23,000, in 1866 it probably much exceeds 90,000, the last return, 1865, was 87,775. The number of sheep and cattle, and the exports and imports have increased enormously. In 1860 the imports from Great Britain were 57,750, and in 1865, 713,545; total imports, 1860, £742,023; 1865, £2,505,559; total exports, 1860, £523,476; 1865, £1,153,464. Some may think this is owing to its being a smaller community, and may come to the conclusion that the self-government of our colonies might do very well on a small scale, but is unsuited to a large one. Politics do not come within the range of this little book, but, at the same time, there can be no doubt

that the government of Queensland has, for the last six years, been wonderfully well administered both by the Executive and Legislature, and that very great success has been the reward. There seems to be in Queensland a higher state of civilization than in the rest of Australia: the inns are better, tin baths and plenty of towels are provided, which in some new countries it is not easy to get without a great deal of asking for. The people also generally in Queensland seemed to have better manners, and to be cleaner and more nicely dressed than in the rest of Australia, although there is nothing to complain of on these grounds in any of the Colonies of Australia.

Darling Downs is a very rich grazing country; a great deal of the soil is black and greasy, and sheep and cattle thrive wonderfully on it and get very fat. During the late very wet seasons wheat and maize have been grown, but it may be doubted whether they will ever do well in drier weather. The vine has been tried a little, and really good wine is made. Vines will bear a good deal of drought, in fact the best wine all over the world is made in the driest seasons.

The road from Darling Downs to the low country goes through a most beautiful pass; a great part of it has jungle on each side. At the foot of the range the climate is almost tropical, but the change is not so striking as when you go from the table-land of New England to the river Clarence or McLeay. In that case, in winter you leave a climate in many respects

like that of England, with its cabbages and other growths of cold countries, and in half an hour you get into the land of pine-apples and bananas. I once left people sowing wheat on the top of the range, and found them reaping at the bottom.

The Queensland Government is making a railroad through the range ; it is finished for about thirty miles from the head of the navigation of the river Bremmer at Ipswich. The Government has very wisely made the railway with a very narrow guage ; it is much cheaper, as of course the cuttings and embankments need not be so wide, and it can bear much sharper curves than a broader gauge. It goes about fifteen miles an hour, which is quite fast enough, at all events, for goods. It has the prettiest and most comfortable little carriages I have ever seen. Steamers come up the river Bremmer to Ipswich, which is a thriving town. It is clean and nicely built, and is placed in a pleasant country. Ipswich has plenty of places of public worship and schools, and a very superior Literary Institution on really a grand scale. The population on the 31st of December, 1865, was 16,254. Between Ipswich and Brisbane there are some fields of cotton. It was thought at one time that any amount of cotton could be grown in Queensland : there is no doubt that it grows well and is very good, perhaps the very best in the world : some of the sea-island variety, grown in Queensland, was shewn in the Exhibition, 1862 ; it got a prize, and a bale of it sold at Man-

chester for five shillings the pound. There were also samples of many other sorts of cotton which got prizes. It seems, however, that it does not pay to grow it, and some companies which tried it have been wound up. I saw fields of cotton near the road from Ipswich to Brisbane, which, it was believed, would not pay for the trouble of picking.* It is probable that cotton can only be produced, even at its present price, by black labour. Coal is found on the river banks, and most likely there is a great deal of it, but it has not yet been much worked.

Brisbane is a handsome town, with fine broad streets. The population on the 31st December, 1865, was 29,637. There is a very fine tide river with a temporary bridge of wood over it; an iron bridge has been ordered from England. The span of the river is a good deal wider than the Thames at London Bridge. Very large ships cannot yet come up to Brisbane; they are forced to stop in Moreton Bay, where there is good anchorage and not the slightest difficulty in shipping goods. A great deal however is being done by dredging the river, and it may be hoped that within no distant time, ships of any burden may be able to get up to Brisbane. The river water is brackish, but a very fine reservoir below the heads of two streams in the hills, about seven miles off, is being made. It is a great work, and will supply the town with plenty of the best of water.

* Cotton-growing in 1866-7 seems to have been very successful, and the crop large.

There are twenty-three places of worship in Brisbane, and every kind of institution, such as a Literary Institute, and a concert-room or opera-house. They have occasionally an Italian Opera Company, and I was told on good authority that it was quite as good as an opera in Italy, except at Milan, Naples, or Genoa; in fact, about the same as the Pergola at Florence used to be before Florence became the capital of the new kingdom. The Italian Opera Company goes its rounds in the Pacific, taking California, and the large towns in the Australian Colonies, and this accounts for its being so good.

The people were kind enough to invite me to a public dinner, with which I was much gratified; nothing could have gone off better in any part of the world. I was also most hospitably and kindly received by the Governor and Lady Bowen, and was present at a ball at Government House, where everything was as gay and cheerful as could be; the ladies' dresses were really in the very best of taste. The Government House and many other buildings are beautiful; the stone is good, and it seems as if the spirit of Greek taste had been given to the Colony by Lady Bowen, who is an Ionian Islander.

The gardens are most lovely. There is a public botanical garden in one of the bights of the river, in which almost everything that grows in the tropics thrives, as well as the productions of more temperate climates. The coffee-tree is vigorous, with plenty of

berry, and pine-apples and strawberries grow side by side; the pine-apples are good, but the strawberries are a poor crop. Many private gardens are almost equally good, and some of them have hedges of Bourgainvillea, growing ten or fifteen feet high; nothing can be prettier than this plant in full flower. The summers in Brisbane are hot, but it is a heat which like that of the rest of Australia, seems to hurt no one. If Brisbane is found to be too hot, there are very pretty watering-places in Moreton Bay which are much cooler. In winter the climate is most delightful, cold enough for a little fire. The spring is an English summer, with roses and all English summer flowers in the greatest luxuriance. There are also plenty of roses and other flowers during the whole winter.

I have thus endeavoured to give a rapid sketch of a rapid journey. The whole of it took exactly three months, from Southampton to embarking at Sydney on the return voyage, being from the 22nd of June to the 22nd of September. To this must be added fifteen days in Ceylon which were spent on the return voyage in October. On my return, despite of some slight delays from quarantine and other causes, I landed at Trieste on the 2nd of December. At the present time a still more interesting tour might be made, as there are steamers from Panama to New Zealand and Sydney. These steamers take only a few days longer time to Sydney than those by the Red Sea. The magnificent vessels of the Royal Mail Company take passengers to

the Isthmus, and there are very good steamers on the other side to New Zealand and on to Sydney.

A tourist leaving England in March by way of Panama would arrive in Sydney in May, and would have smooth water nearly the whole voyage, as the Australian winter gales do not generally begin to be severe before June. The winter season on the coast in New South Wales and Queensland is not unlike an English summer, but there is generally much finer weather. In the interior it is colder, but pleasant and bracing. The tourist might leave in October or November, after the winter gales are over. He would get the South-east Trades in a day or two after leaving the coast of Australia, and then have a fair wind all the way to Ceylon, from whence he would have calms or a gentle North-east monsoon as far as Aden. He might, however, like to visit India during the coolest season, in which case he might still get to the Red Sea before the great heat had set in. If, however, he delayed till towards the spring, he would find the steamers overcrowded with passengers who leave India to avoid the heat of the summer. Nothing can be more disagreeable than a steamer overcrowded with passengers; it is to be avoided as much as possible. A very pretty tour might thus be made with almost as much ease as it formerly took to make the tour of the Mediterranean.

THE END.



